

terly strategy in apostolic policy. Christian enterprise first took possession of strategic localities to be used as centers of church extension. Success in the work of the world's conversion has with rare exceptions followed the lines of human growth and prospective greatness. Christianity has allied itself with the young and vigorous colonizing races and by natural sequence the strategic points for preaching the gospel are where those nations are to be. The principles of such a strategic wisdom should lead us to look on these United States as first and foremost the chosen seat of enterprise for the world's conversion. As goes America, so goes the world. It must not be forgotten that the pulse and pace of the world have been marvellously quickened during the 19th century. Any one as old as the century has seen a very large proportion of the progress in civilization made by the race. Not only mechanical inventions but with the exception of astronomy modern science as we now know it is almost wholly the creation of the past century, as also have all the glorious fruits of missions been gathered in it.

Another evidence of progress is found in the great ideas which have become the fixed possession of men. Among them is that of individual liberty which has borne fruit in the abolition of slavery everywhere. Another which also finds its root in the teachings of Christ is that of honor to womanhood. A century ago it was not uncommon for a man to buy a wife or sell one into servitude. Another is found in the enhanced valuation of human life. A century ago the law recognized 223 capital offences. Now there are but two.

The whip and spur of steam and electricity have given an impetus and intensity to activity which makes ten years of life equal to fifty. "Better a day of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." But the comparison does not stop here. Ten years in the new West are in their results fully equal to fifty east of the Mississippi.

We ought to imitate the liberality of the soil, which pays with usurious interest the smallest seed that is sown therein. Holy Scripture compares an ungrateful person to a field or vine, which remains barren, though carefully cultivated; on the other hand, a grateful man is like a fruitful field which increases in value a hundred-fold. It is thus that we must act toward those from whom we have received benefits.

There can be no real fear or seriousness of heart until a man has come to understand, at least in some measure, what he is—that is, to realize his own awful structure and destiny.

NOTES OF INDIA.

India contains one-fifth of the human race.

Twenty-three thousand die in India every day.

Most of Queen Victoria's subjects living in India are heathens.

If every missionary in India could reach 47,000 souls, there would still be in darkness 200,000,000.

India has 1,686 missionaries. If its population were divided equally among them, each missionary would have in his care 165,864 souls.

Some idea of the great diversity of life in India may be gained from the fact that in Bombay the last census showed that seventy six different languages were spoken, representing as many different modes of life and religious beliefs.

In the Calcutta boys' school all the different races of the empire are said to be represented among the pupils. Such schools as these, as they multiply, will do more, perhaps, than any other agency toward welding into a homogeneous whole the diversified tongues and nationalities that make up that vast empire.

Last December 150 delegates from different parts of India and about 4,500 visitors came together in the Eleventh National Congress. A very marked characteristic of this congress is said to have been frequent Biblical allusion in the speeches of the delegates, though few of them were Christians, and the very common breaking of caste—Mohammedans and Christians eating and drinking together.

It is almost impossible for us to understand what the changing of their religion means for these people. A writer thus remarks: "It means lifting one's self out of the ruts of thought which have been followed by one's parents, grand-parents and ancestors for more centuries than America has been known. It means breaking the shackles of hide-bound custom—the bulwarks of caste, which is still the powerful autocrat that brooks no individual action. It means the giving up of old faiths, old deities, old worship. It means the severance of old ties, the alienation of old friends, and the antagonizing of the whole community. It means a life among strangers; want of assistance from family or friends. It means barring all the old familiar well-beaten paths and a future well-defined, for an unknown and untried road, whose only "hope" is based on the teaching of others. In this it fulfills Christ's condition, forsaking *all* for him."

As the gospel spreads it breaks down barriers of hate and caste and race.

Our Bible School.

THE PRAYER MEETING.

J. L. GILLIN.

As far as the spiritual refreshment of the members of the church is concerned no service is of as much value as a live prayer meeting. The preaching service is for the teaching of the members, or for the reaching of sinners. The modern preaching service, the singing excepted—and too often this is given over to an infidel choir—affords no opportunity for worship.

This deficiency, the prayer meeting is meant to supply. It is essentially a worshipping body as well as a social meeting in which each member can ask and discuss the questions relative to our spiritual life, express the confession of salvation, the hopes and aspirations of the heart.

No worship can be helpful that is not intelligent, hence arises the need of the study of the Bible in connection with the feature of worship.

The studies that will appear in this column are meant to supply a working basis for the study of the Bible in prayer meeting. They are not intended to be closely followed, but rather, merely suggestive. Any man that is a slave to them when using them will fail, but any man of tact and good practical sense will accommodate them to the circumstances of his flock and the demands of his field, and perhaps may find them helpful.

The Psalms have been chosen for our first study. This Jewish hymn book—for such it was, deserves far more attention than it has received among us moderns. It is a volume—yes, five volumes, filled with the most beautiful songs that the Jewish Temple service called forth during the centuries of its glory from the hearts of its noblest singers. In these songs are crystalized the noblest faith of God's chosen people. They are songs of victory, of penitence, of pleading prayer, of agonizing tenderness and of bounding hope, which sound out of the distant past, in an age when the only love songs were these, sounding the praises of the carnal love, these Hebrews sent forth songs of the purest love for one God, songs which yet command the admiration of men, not for their melody alone, but for their high and holy sentiments. They are the words of God. As such, not as songs, we shall study them. Any questions that any one may desire to have answered about prayer meeting will receive what answer my limited experience can give, if sent to me.